

## ELINOR WONDERS WHY

### Clubhouse Away

OUTLINE - September 9, 2019

By Katherine Sandford

#### Commented [1]:

There are a few things to discuss as I've noted below. It feels a bit complex and visually challenging for several reasons. See notes below.

**Elinor's Question:** Why does the Clubhouse keep blowing away, but the trees don't?

**Logline:** The Exploring Club is interrupted when the clubhouse blows away, until Elinor and her friends realize it needs "roots" like a tree.

**Curriculum Goals;** LS2. Understand that animals have different body parts that are used in different ways to meet their needs, and that plants have different parts that help them survive and grow:

- b. Identify the basic parts of plants and their function
- d. Explore how different external features of an animal or plant help it survive in its environment. (Elinor and her friends notice that the roots keep a tree from blowing over in the wind).

**ND3.** (RTL Crosscutting concept 'Structure and Function'): Understand that structures and materials in the natural world can be used or can inspire the engineering of structures with similar function in the designed world. (Elinor and her friends copy the idea of "roots" by using pegs to secure their Clubhouse).

**SEP1.** Asking questions (science) and defining problems (engineering)

- a. Demonstrate curiosity about the greater world outside of their local environment
- b. Ask more complex questions about observable phenomena
- c. Ask and/or identify cause and effect questions that can be answered by an investigation
- d. Identify a problem that can be solved by the design a new or improved object or tool (engineering) (Elinor and her friends wonder why the trees don't blow away but the Clubhouse does. When they discover the tree's roots, they wonder if they can make roots for the Clubhouse).

**SEP6.** Constructing explanations (science) and Designing Solutions (engineering)

- a. Use background knowledge experiences, and data to construct reasonable explanations and theories of natural phenomena (science)
- b. Look for and describe patterns and relationships in natural phenomena (science)

- c. Use and apply productive science discourse to support an explanation
- d. Use evidence to support a theory or solution to a problem (engineering) (Elinor and her friends discover that the structure of the tree's roots stops it from blowing away, and extrapolate that ALL trees have roots, although we usually can't see them. They decide to replicate the roots by sticking pegs through the bottom of the Clubhouse to keep it from blowing away).

#### **EXT. FOREST CLEARING – DAY (AUTUMN)**

It's a breezy fall day and Olive happily skips OS humming to herself, obviously in a great mood. She sits on the ground with her back against a big boulder and <SIGHS> but she's immediately uncomfortable, she wriggles around then pulls out a rock from underneath her, tries to settle, wriggles again, then pulls a stick from behind her, then finally settles back. AHHH.

Olive looks around happily, as the breeze picks up. ANGLE ON: The wind whips through the autumn trees overhead and loosens a leaf which falls right beside her. Oooh. Inspired, she takes out her notebook and starts to draw it.

ANGLE ON: her drawing starts out perfect but the lines begin to wiggle as she begins to GIGGLE.

WIDEN TO REVEAL: Olive is now really wiggling and giggling, "WHOAAAAOOO" She jumps to her feet and we see a caterpillar is crawling along her trunk. "Oh, it's YOU that's tickling me, silly caterpillar." She gently puts it on a nearby tree and is about to settle down to draw again, when she hears, "Olive, OLIVE!! There you are!"

It's ELINOR bounding OS with ARI, SALLY, SILAS and KOA. "Come on, Olive, it's time for the Exploring Club meeting." But Olive isn't quite ready - she says she needs some "Alone Time" but she hasn't quite found the right spot yet.

Oh, okay, Elinor is fine with that, they can wait until Olive is ready, and she goes off with the other explorers. But Sally Beaver stays behind, puzzled. "Alone time? What's that?"

Olive explains that Alone Time is just quiet time to think and draw and just look. Look? "Yeah, exploring is awesome," Olive explains, "But sometimes I just like to look around where I am,"

#### **Commented [2]:**

This feels a bit odd to me. Elinor and friends have found her and about to have a meeting. And she doesn't want to join them because she wants alone time first. She seems to be making everyone wait. How about if it isn't a scheduled thing... elinor finds her (sally can be with her) and she says they're heading to the clubhouse to play for a bit before the meeting. Then olive can say she'll be there soon. This way she isn't delaying their meeting as they're all playing by the clubhouse first.

Ooooh. Sally is intrigued and she and Olive take a minute to look around. Then suddenly - Whooosh! A big breeze rustles the leaves high in the trees, then they hear a voice...

"Yikes! We've got a problem here!" Uh-oh, that's Ari! Olive and Sally rush to help.

#### EXT. CLUBHOUSE SPOT - DAY

The girls arrive to find their friends struggling to hold onto the unwieldy (and comic) cardboard Clubhouse as it's buffeted by the wind. It blows to the right, WHOOOAA!! - they rush to stabilize it, it blows to the left, WHAAA!! they stabilize it that way, The wind dies down for a beat - whew!

Then a big WHOAAA! as the Clubhouse is blown out of their hands, up into the air - and away!

WIDEN TO REVEAL: The Clubhouse is tumbling down the hill. Oh, no!! AFTER THAT CLUBHOUSE!! The Explorers give chase! Olive puts her notebook on the ground, anchors it with a rock and rushes after her friends.

**FUN CLUBHOUSE ACTION SEQUENCE:** The kids chase the rolling cardboard Clubhouse as it bounces down the hill, buffeted by the wind. Finally it lands and the kids manage to grab it, as the wind dies down. Now let's get our Clubhouse home!

#### EXT. CLUBHOUSE SPOT - DAY

As the kids drag their Clubhouse back to its rightful place and get it set up, they wonder why it blew away. Well, it's a very windy day, they can see that by the way the tree branches are rustling and swaying? But wait a minute, Elinor observes, why aren't the trees around them blowing over the way the Clubhouse did? It's a real mystery!

But before they can process the info WHOOSH another gust of wind comes along and blows the Clubhouse the other way - into the forest. Not again! The Explorers run after it.

#### EXT. FOREST - DAY

Laughing, the kids follow their tumbling clubhouse along a path through the forest when whoops, a few papers fly out the window. "Oh, no! Our Exploring Club notes!" cries Olive, and she and Sally run in another direction after the papers.

**Commented [3]:**  
So olive settled somewhere close enough to the clubhouse to hear this. Let's note it in the location pls. Forest near clubhouse.

**Commented [4]:**  
My only concern with this is that we've established that the clubhouse is rather large after they built an extension in 'expandable clubhouse'. The wind would have to be significant. It's also structured that doesn't allow it to roll as it has lots of add ons. We could perhaps have it split so the part that was the original smaller clubhouse is the section that blows away, which can also roll as we had it in 'expandable clubhouse'. However, having one piece fly but not the other...is this not going to be confusing to explain?.

**Commented [5]:**  
The trees are painted in the backgrounds. We will not be able to have all the trees swaying. We will create specific background to allow for this for the scene they make this observation.

## **EXT. BIG TREE - DAY**

"Over there, near the Big Tree!" cries Olive as they follow the blowing papers into the grove where they come to rest around a very low ridge with a big tree growing on top. As they pick up the papers, **Olive tells her friend that she's always loved this tree, because it's so big, and it seems even bigger because it's growing on top of this small hill beside the path.**

At that moment Sally chases a blowing paper behind the Big Tree and sees the most amazing thing. "Olive, come and see this!" Olive joins her friend and stops dead. **WOW!**

ANGLE ON: you can SEE the Big Tree's huge roots from his angle, because they've grown over a rock. How beautiful.

At that moment who shows up but Elinor, looking for her friends. Good news, they've caught the Clubhouse and the others are bringing it back. Olive says that's great, then shows her what they've discovered. Wow, Elinor is amazed, those big branches are growing DOWN instead of up. That's sooo interesting.

At that moment the wind picks up. Ooooh. The girls watch as the big tree blows in the strong wind, but it doesn't blow away like the Clubhouse. Why not? We need more observations!

Elinor, Olive and Sally observe the tree swaying in the wind. ANGLE ON: They notice the branches move around a lot, and even the tree trunk moves a tiny bit at the top, but near the ground the tree trunk is solid and doesn't move at all. Elinor looks closely ANGLE ON: The tree's strong roots. "Maybe it's because of these downward-growing branches, they seem to anchor the tree to the ground." But this confuses Sally, she's never seen branches that grow downwards before, and she's seen a lot of trees. "That's a good point, Sally," says Elinor so Olive decides to check her Nature Book.

ANGLE ON: The illustration in the book of the tree's root system. Olive says it looks like those downward branches are actually the tree's roots, but that we don't usually see them because they're growing underground.

Olive reads the roots absorb water and food from the soil **and make a structure which supports the trunk and branches so the**

### **Commented [6]:**

This seems too similar to the episode where olives favourite tree growing on top of a hill falls over - may be confusing

tree stands up straight. "Ohh, a structure," says Olive. "I like that word. But what does it mean?"

**Commented [7]:**  
This seems a bit complex - the roots make a structure - is that explained correctly?

Elinor extrapolates "Maybe a structure means a bunch of smaller things that work together, like a whole bunch of roots make a structure that supports the tree." That works for Olive. And ALL the trees have roots that grow down deep into the soil, but we just don't see them." "And that's why trees don't blow over in the wind," adds Sally proudly. YES! We figured it out. Olive and Elinor high five her.

At this moment the girls hear their friends' voices in the near distance. ANGLE ON: They're carrying the rescued Clubhouse back home, so Olive, Elinor and Sally rush to help.

#### EXT. CLUBHOUSE SPOT -- DAY

The kids arrive with their wayward Clubhouse. Olive has the Clubhouse notes under her arm. She puts them down beside her notebook (under the rock) and sticks her pencil through the top of the pages so they won't blow away again. ANGLE ON Elinor notices, Oooh, as Olive runs back to join her friends.

Okay, we've got the Clubhouse back in place, but how are we going to keep it from blowing away again, (a sudden gust demonstrates this is a real possibility). Sally says it's too bad that the Clubhouse doesn't have roots like the trees and explains to her friends what they've discovered.

Meanwhile Elinor, inspired by the pencil Olive stuck in the ground, gets an idea.

"Maybe it can!" Wha? Maybe the CLUBHOUSE can have roots! She takes a stick and uses it as a peg to poke through the carboard and into the ground - it works! But then the wind picks up and the Clubhouse almost blows away, held down by only one peg. Elinor realizes they need a bunch of pegs. Yeah, says Olive, a structure. She likes that word.

Her friends join her in inserting more stick-pegs (and rocks?) in place as they sing the song.

ELINOR, OLIVE, SALLY?

Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh  
The wind blows through the trees  
But they bend and sway  
Dancing in the breeze

Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh,  
The trees stay on the ground  
Because their roots, roots, roots  
Hold them down

Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh  
Our Clubhouse blew away  
But we brought it back  
And here's where it will stay

Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh,  
The Clubhouse sticks around  
Because we made it roots  
To hold it down.

Elinor and her friends get their Clubhouse secured, now they can do their meeting then go exploring! But Olive asks if it's all right if they do the meeting without her. She still wants some alone-time and she's found the perfect spot. Sure, her friends are fine with that. So off she goes.

**EXT. BIG TREE - DAY**

Olive is nestled in the roots of the beautiful tree, drawing in her notebook, when suddenly Sally arrives. Oh, Olive! I didn't see you there! Turns out Sally wants to try some alone time too, and they had the same idea for a good spot, in the roots of the Big Tree. Sally says she'll go somewhere else and leave Olive by herself, but Olive says no, no, it's fine. There's room enough for both of them to be alone, snuggled in the roots of the big tree. And there is.

**Sara Sweetman Notes:**

Hi All,

I like the connections between natural process of the roots holding the tree down and using "pegs" to hold down the club house. I felt a little distracted reading the outline and wondering when the science content was going to come in. I also worry about too much time and focus on "alone" time. The concept is OK but MOST preschoolers would not identify with it and I would not dwell on it long.

I think the wind blowing the clubhouse will be fun. I picture the kids grabbing hold of the club house and then grabbing hold of each other and then "anchoring" themselves with a tree. Then they might want to investigate why the tree was a good anchor (didn't blow in the wind too), which could lead to root discovery. I'm not sure the word structure is being used quite right. The structure is the describing properties of an object like the

shape, color, hardness... what was described was more about systems (parts work together to support the function of the whole).

I do love the image put into mind at the end of the script where more than one character share 'alone' time in the tree roots. Beautiful.

